

Britain should be the controlling motive of our military preparations. For again I say that our first and only defence is in England, and we should strive to keep the battle there. In the recent fighting in and over England we are grateful to think that Canada has been ably represented in the Royal Air Force. I am glad to know that a Canadian squadron which forms part of the Royal Air Force has played a distinguished part. I have some reason to know about this. Some of the finest young men that Canada ever produced went over to the other side from my province in 1937 and 1938, and many of them will not return.

But, after all, our contribution to the first battle of Britain has been rather pitiful. In fact it has not been a factor in the defence of Britain at all, so far as I am aware. If I am wrong I hope my hon. friend will illuminate the position. I recall with feelings which I shall never forget the call of Mr. Eden over the radio in June last for planes, guns and tanks—and we had none to send. I recall that we were told early last session by the Minister of Munitions and Supply that we could not make tanks in Canada. I was assured at that time that they could be made in Canada. At that very time I knew that the Angus shops were ready and willing to undertake the manufacture of tanks. I had it from one of the responsible officials that they were only waiting for the word to go. I am glad to know that the minister has changed his mind. It was several months late, but better late than never. Apparently he changed his mind by reason of the persistent and patient efforts of the hon. member for Parkdale (Mr. Bruce), who although derided from across the floor of this house kept to his text. All honour to the hon. member for Parkdale.

Then a word with respect to the manufacture of aeroplanes in Canada. This is a great problem which this country should have faced long ago. A number of years ago a leading Canadian company was willing to undertake the task of building planes in this country, but the government would not. Latterly the government had another change of heart and decided to build these machines in Canada. A government owned and controlled company has been set up for this purpose. I congratulate the government upon this change. May I also congratulate the minister upon having enlisted the services of an outstanding young Canadian executive to take charge of these operations. I have known this gentleman since his boyhood.

In connection with the manufacture of aeroplanes I should like to have from the minister some explanation as to why Mr.

Sanderson of Fleet Aircraft Limited was brought into this work, and then a few months afterwards his services were dispensed with. Some explanation is due beyond the terms of the platitudes contained in the minister's letter to Mr. Sanderson at the time of his retirement. Is it possible that his position as head of aircraft production in Canada was inconsistent with his position as head of Fleet Aircraft Limited? The minister should tell us the naked truth about this. Nor have the Canadian people ever been told the truth about the retirement of Mr. Wallace Campbell from the war purchasing board. I invite the minister to tell us the facts about this.

Then there is the question of big guns. To my knowledge we have never made big guns in Canada, but I understand that we are now approaching the task. In an interview given on October 10 by the Minister of National Revenue (Mr. Gibson), he declared that before the end of 1940 Canada would be making heavy naval guns, the largest used in the empire. That was announced by the director of public information in a release dated October 10 on Canada's war effort. This was part of the government's propaganda, and I have it under my hand. To me that was an astonishing claim. It seemed incredible to me. It simply is not true. Why make such claims? They only puzzle and confuse the Canadian people, and it is a most reprehensible practice.

Mr. GIBSON: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. The statement which has been quoted by the leader of the opposition (Mr. Hanson) was not correct. I never made such a statement. I did say that naval guns were to be made in a factory which was to be one of the largest and most modern in the British empire—

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): The hon. member can make a speech later.

Mr. GIBSON: —not, a factory making guns which were the biggest and most modern. That is the statement which was made.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Here is what the government's director of public information said: "Canada's War Effort"—this is an official release—a weekly review of developments on the home front, issued by the government; and the eighth item is:

Hon. C. W. G. Gibson, Minister of National Revenue, states in an interview that heavy naval guns, the largest used in the empire, will be produced in Canada before the end of 1940.

Well, where is the crossing of the wires? Somewhere.